

Sustainable production and consumption of food in Flanders

Topic: Sustainable production and consumption 1

Author: Evelien Dils

Co-Authors: An Vercauteren, Ann Van der Linden, Theo Geerken

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Evelien Dils, VITO, Belgium

An Vercauteren, VITO, Belgium

Ann Van der Linden, VITO, Belgium

Theo Geerken, VITO, Belgium

In Flanders, EE-IO tables with high resolution (117x117) have been developed in recent years, both for 2003 and 2007. The model includes data on imports and exports, both to Europe (data from EU NAMEA 2000) and the rest of the world (US IO 1998). Up until now, most of the work done with the Flemish IO-model focused on the validation of the model. During the course of 2012, the model will be used to analyse the environmental impacts related to food production and consumption. More specifically we will look for opportunities to use IO in environmental policy.

Reducing the environmental impact of the production and consumption of food is one of the elements high on the agenda of Flemish government agencies today. The EE-IO model gives an integrated picture, both economic and environmental aspects as well as regional (Flemish) production and production abroad (EU and rest of the world) are included. As such, the model has ample potential to identify the key issues to be tackled in future policy. The Flemish model can be used to show the evolution in all sectors that are part of the food chain as well as in the consumption (diet, expenditure) since data are available for 2003 and 2007. In our project we will address a number of relevant questions: Should policy be focused on production of food or on the consumption itself: where is the largest potential for impact reduction? What will be the effect of possible diet changes, such as a veggie day? Maybe the reduction of food waste should be the priority? How can we include rebound effects into the policy analysis?

During the presentation, we will present the first findings focusing on the policy aspects. Future actions in the project will be outlined as well.